

Remarks

Claims 1-84 are pending in this application. Claims 1-39, 49-75 and 78-84 have been cancelled. Claims 40-48, 76, and 77 remain for examination.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 46-48 and 77.

Objection to the Specification

The specification at page 6 has been objected to for omitting application serial numbers. Accordingly, the specification has been amended deleting the sentences containing the missing application serial numbers.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 40-45 and 76 are rejected under §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,368,094 ("Dennis"). The Examiner alleges that Dennis discloses a method of cutting 40 a stream of molten plastic to form pellets and carrying said pellets on arms 40a-40d toward molding machine 26. (*Office Action* at p. 3.) Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Dennis discloses a rotary compression molding apparatus that carries cavities in the form of mold dies or closure shells. (*Dennis* at col. 2, ll. 50-53.) The apparatus comprises an annular carousel supporting molding blocks 32 that are arranged in a circle. (*Id.* at col. 4, ll. 52-54.) Each block 32 has a plurality of cavities arranged radially in a row. (*Id.* at col. 4, ll. 56-58.) The apparatus also further includes a molten plastic delivery assembly 34 having an L-shaped manifold block 46 and a plurality of nozzles 38a-38d for dispensing molten plastic material. (*Id.* at col. 4, ll. 60-66.) A multi-cutter having a plurality of cutter assemblies 40a-40d removes plastic material from nozzles 38a-38d. (*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 1-5.)

In operation, the rotating multi-cutter 40 of Dennis separates pellets of molten plastic from nozzles 38a-38d and deposits the pellets into cavities 30 of blocks 32. (*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 15-18.) The pellets are then compression molded at molding station 53. (*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 18-19.)

Independent claims 40 and 76 recite, among other limitations, a method of delivering a mold charge pellet to a molding machine comprising cutting a molten stream to form a pellet, carrying the pellets away from the stream on an arm, and moving the arm about an axis toward the molding machine and aligning the pellet carried by the arm with the mold cavity.

Applicants respectfully submit that Dennis does not disclose an arm that carries the pellets away from the stream and moves about an axis toward the molding machine. Dennis also does not disclose "aligning said pellet carried by said arm with said mold cavity by radially and angularly displacing said arm relative to said axis over a portion of the path of travel of the arm; and moving at least a portion of said arm axially to discharge said pellet from said arm and into said mold cavity," as recited in claim 40, or "aligning said pellet carried by said arm with said mold cavity by radially and angularly displacing said arm relative to said axis over a portion of the path of travel of the arm," as recited in claim 76. Thus, Dennis fails to anticipate independent claims 40 and 76 or claims 41-45, which depend from claim 40.

Furthermore, Dennis does not teach or suggest each of the limitations of the claimed invention. The apparatus of Dennis employs a rotating cutter assembly positioned over the carousel containing the mold cavities. (*Dennis* at FIG. 1.) FIG. 2 of Dennis illustrates a rotating shaft 41 that mounts the cutter assemblies 40a-40d and also includes "axially arranged flow channels which deliver pressurized air to each cutter assembly." (*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 43-47.) The pressured air assists in expelling the plastic pellet removed and carried away from the nozzles 38a-38d, respectively.

The four cutter assemblies 40a, 40b, 40c, 40d can be arranged on a common air channel to expel four plastic pellets simultaneously or can be on individual air channels such that the timing of pellet ejection of each cutter can be precisely adjusted. In this regard, an intelligent logic controller (PLC) can be used to time the air assisted ejection of the pellets from the cutter assemblies. A sequential ejection of the pellets from the four cutter assemblies 40a-40d (and from the additional cutters 42a-42d, described below) is contemplated due to the fact that the radially outermost cavities of the successively presented molding

blocks on the revolving carousel are moving at a greater velocity than the radially innermost cavities.

(*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 57-66.)

In contrast to the claimed invention, Dennis does not employ an arm for carrying the pellet away from the stream, much less in the manner recited in claims 40 and 76. Instead, the apparatus of Dennis positions the cutter assembly over the carousel, which contain the molds, and uses pressurized air to assist in expelling the pellets into the mold. By using pressurized air to expel the pellets in to the mold, there is no motivation in Dennis for an arm to carry away the pellets from the stream and move toward the molding machine. Thus, Dennis fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

Reconsideration

It is believed that all claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that a teleconference would expedite prosecution of the present application the Examiner is invited to call the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Any amendments or cancellation or submissions with respect to the claims herein is made without prejudice and is not an admission that said canceled or amended or otherwise affected subject matter is not patentable. Applicants reserve the right to pursue canceled or amended subject matter in one or more continuation, divisional or continuation-in-part applications.

To the extent that Applicants have not addressed one or more assertions of the Examiner because the foregoing response is sufficient, this is not an admission by Applicants as to the accuracy of such assertions.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any fees in addition to fees submitted herewith that may be required to enter/allow this response and any accompanying papers to our deposit account 02-3038 and credit any overpayments thereto.

Respectfully submitted

/Maria T. Bautista/

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Maria T. Bautista, Esq., Reg. No. 52,516
RISSMAN JOBSE HENDRICKS & OLIVERIO, LLP
Customer Number 021127
Tel: (617) 367-4600 Fax: (617) 367-4656